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B O R O U G H O F B R I D G N O R T H

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1955



BOROUGH OF BRIDGNORTH

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY

1955.

Medical Officer of Health : Margaret H.F. Turnbull,
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Senior Sanitary Inspector : E.J. Morgans, B.Sc., M.R.S.I.

Additional Sanitary Inspector : R.V. Webb, A.R.S.I.
(Resigned 11.9.55)

E.G. Shaw, M.S.I.A., A.R.S.H.
(As from 12.9.55)

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BOROUGH OF BRIDGNORTH
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
1955

College House,
Bridgnorth.

November, 1956.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors:

Mr. Mayor, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1955.

The Vital Statistics for the Borough this year are quite satisfactory. The Birth-Rate is rather lower than that for the previous year, but is still above the rate for the country in general. The Death-Rate is higher by 3.6 per 1,000 of the population than the corresponding rate for 1954, and is higher than the national rate for 1955 by 0.8 per 1,000. The Infant Mortality Rate (which is generally considered to be a good index of the health of a community) shows a substantial decrease as compared with the rate recorded for 1954, and is also well below the rate for England and Wales for 1955. Likewise, the Still-Birth Rate is very much lower than that for the previous year, and well below the 1955 rate for England and Wales.

The Borough remained remarkably free from cases of notifiable infectious disease for the second year in succession, and only 20 notifications were received from general practitioners.

Good progress was made on the town's new sewerage and sewage disposal scheme, and the disposal works were dealing with sewage from part of the High Town before the end of the year. The approved scheme for the sewerage of Oldbury was commenced, and then deferred for reconsideration. Consideration was also given to the sewerage of Quatford.

22 new Council Houses were completed on the Grove Site, and 28 were under construction at the end of the year. The Council now owns 23.15% of the inhabited houses in the town.

Levelling operations at the refuse tip towards the end of the year effected some improvement in its condition, the summer months having brought the usual complaints about fly-nuisance from householders in the vicinity and from the nearby Institutions. Consideration was also given to possible sites in the Borough for an incinerator, the provision of which is highly desirable.

I should like to express my appreciation and thanks to Mr. E.J. Morgans and Mr. E.G. Shaw for their valuable assistance in the preparation of certain sections of this Report.

I have the honour to be
Your obedient Servant,

MARGARET H.F. TURNBULL.

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area of Borough, in acres	-	2,645
Estimated Population (mid-1955)	-	6,320
Number of Inhabited Houses	-	2,155
Rateable Value of Borough (at 31.12.55)	-	£37,221
Estimated Product of ld. Rate (at 31.12.55)	-	£148

VITAL STATISTICS

<u>Live Births</u>		<u>1955</u>	<u>1954</u>	<u>1953</u>
Legitimate	(Male	61	67	51
	(Female	51	53	47
	(Total	112	120	98
	(Rate per 1,000 of population	17.7	19.1	16.0
Illegitimate	(Male	2	4	2
	(Female	2	4	5
	(Total	4	8	7
	(Rate per 1,000 of population	0.6	1.3	1.1
Total	(Male	63	71	53
	(Female	53	57	52
	(Total	116	128	105
	(Crude Birth-Rate per 1000 of population	18.4	20.4	17.1
	("Corrected" Birth-Rate per 1000 of population	18.4	20.4	17.1
<u>Still-Births</u>				
	(Male	0	6	0
	(Female	2	0	0
	(Total	2	6	0
	(Rate per 1,000 live and still-births	16.9	44.8	0
<u>Deaths</u>				
	(Male	46	30	37
	(Female	49	37	39
	(Total	95	67	76
	(Crude Death-Rate per 1000 of population	15.0	10.7	12.4
	("Corrected" Death-Rate per 1000 of population	12.5	8.9	10.4

Deaths related to Pregnancy and Childbirth

Maternal mortality rate per 1,000 live and still-births	0	0	0
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		<u>1955</u>	<u>1954</u>	<u>1953</u>
<u>Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age.</u>				
Legitimate	(Male	1	1	2
	(Female	1	2	1
	(Total	2	3	3
	(Rate per 1,000			
	(legitimate live births	17.9	25.0	30.6
Illegitimate	(Male	0	0	0
	(Female	0	0	0
	(Total	0	0	0
	(Rate per 1,000 illegit-			
	(imate live births	0	0	0
Total	(Male	1	1	2
	(Female	1	2	1
	(Total	2	3	3
	(Infant Mortality Rate			
	(per 1,000 total live			
	(births	17.2	23.4	28.6

Deaths from:-

Cancer (all sites)	10
Measles	0
Whooping-cough	0
Tuberculosis	1
Diphtheria	0

Rates for England and Wales, 1955.

	<u>1955</u>
Birth Rate per 1,000 of population	15.0
Still-birth Rate per 1,000 Live and still-births	23.1
Death-Rate per 1,000 of population	11.7
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 total live-births	24.9

NOTES ON VITAL STATISTICS

Population.

The Registrar General's estimated mid-year population for the Borough for 1955 was 6,320, an increase of 50 on the estimated mid-year population for 1954. This figure is used in the calculation of the Birth and Death-Rates.

Births.

During the year there were 116 live births - a decrease of 12 on the figure for 1954. Of the 116, 4 were illegitimate.

The Birth-Rate for the Borough for 1955 was therefore 18.4 per 1,000 of the population - a decrease of 2.0 births per 1,000 of the population as compared with the figure for 1954.

The Birth-Rate for England and Wales for 1955 was 15.0 per 1,000 of the population.

Still-Births.

There were only 2 still-births in the Borough during the year as compared with 6 in 1954.

The Still-Birth Rate (per 1,000 live plus still-births) for 1955 was thus 16.9, the corresponding rate for England and Wales being 23.1.

Deaths.

A total of 95 persons died during 1955, 46 males and 49 females - an increase of 28 on the figure for 1954.

The "crude" Death-Rate per 1,000 of the population was 15.0 (10.7 in 1954) and the "corrected" Death-Rate, with which comparisons with the rates for other areas, and with that for England and Wales may be made, was 12.5 per 1,000 of the population. The Death-Rate for England and Wales for 1955 was 11.7.

Causes of Death.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Diseases of the Heart and Circulation	17	17	34
Vascular lesions of Nervous System	8	11	19
Cancer (all sites)	4	6	10
Influenza	4	1	5
Accidents (excluding motor vehicle)	3	2	5
Accidents (motor vehicle)	1	0	1
Pneumonia	1	0	1
Diabetes	0	1	1
Tuberculosis (Respiratory)	1	0	1
Suicide	1	0	1
All other causes	<u>6</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>17</u>
	<u>46</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>95</u>

As in recent years Diseases of the Heart and Circulation accounted for the greatest number of deaths - 35.8% of the total, the same percentage as in 1954.

Vascular lesions of the Nervous System accounted for 20% of the total number of deaths, as compared with 13.4% in 1954, and Cancer was responsible for 10.5% of the total as compared with 16.4% in 1954.

Of the 10 deaths due to cancer, 2 were due to cancer of the lung or bronchus, as compared with 1 in 1954. The Cancer death-rate was 1.6 per 1,000 of population, the corresponding rate for England and Wales being 2.05.

There was one death from Respiratory Tuberculosis, there having been none during the previous two years.

Infant Mortality.

Two infants died before attaining the age of 12 months during 1955, as compared with 3 in the previous two years. Both died under the age of 4 weeks.

The Infant Mortality Rate was thus 17.2 per 1,000 live births, as compared with 23.4 in 1954. The Infant Mortality Rate for England and Wales for 1955 was 24.9.

Maternal Mortality.

There were again no deaths related to pregnancy and childbirth in 1955.

Natural Increase of Population.

The number of births exceeded the number of deaths by 21, the corresponding figure for 1954 being 61.

SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

Staff.

The names and professional qualifications of the Public Health Officers of the Authority are given at the beginning of the Report. Mr. R.V. Webb resigned his appointment as Additional Sanitary Inspector with effect from 11th September, 1955, and Mr. E.G. Shaw took up duties in this capacity on 12th September, 1955. There were no other staff changes during the year.

Laboratory Facilities.

Use continued to be made during the year of the facilities provided by the Public Health Laboratory Service at the Royal Salop Infirmary, Shrewsbury, for the bacteriological examination of samples of water, milk and ice-cream and of pathological specimens submitted from Infectious Disease cases.

Hospital and Specialist Services.

The provision of hospital accommodation and specialist services in the area is the responsibility of the Birmingham Regional Hospital Board. There were no changes in the hospital facilities during the year. The Bridgnorth and South Shropshire Infirmary admits all general medical and surgical cases, including children, and also has a Maternity Unit. Cases of Infectious Disease requiring hospital treatment are admitted to the Borough Hospital, Wolverhampton, or to Monkmoor Hospital, Shrewsbury. Tuberculosis patients receive treatment at Shirlett Sanatorium or at Prees Heath, but some have also been admitted to sanatoria at Knightwick and Malvern. Shifnal Hospital admits the chronic sick requiring hospital treatment.

Innage House, a home for old persons in need of residential care and attention, is administered by Salop County Council, in accordance with the provisions of Part III of the National Assistance Act, 1948.

Local Health Authority Services.

In accordance with Part III of the National Health Service Act, 1946, Salop County Council, as Local Health Authority, is responsible for and administers the following services in the area:-

- (a) Health Centres.
- (b) Care of Mothers and young children.
- (c) Domiciliary Midwifery.
- (d) Health Visiting.
- (e) Home Nursing.
- (f) Vaccination and Immunisation.
- (g) Ambulance Services.
- (h) Prevention of illness, care and after-care.
- (i) Domestic Help Service.

The arrangements which exist for the operation of some of these services locally are as follows:-

1. Bridgnorth Welfare Centre.

Ante-natal and Child Welfare Clinic.

A Child Welfare Clinic is held every Monday at the Welfare Centre, Northgate, from 10.0 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. when a Medical Officer and a Health Visitor are in attendance for consultation on all matters relating to Child Welfare.

Expectant mothers also attend on Mondays for routine examination and advice.

The attendances of infants at the clinic during the year were again satisfactory on the whole, but children between the ages of about 2 and 5 years are brought seldom, if at all.

Welfare Foods.

Until September 1955, the National Welfare Foods (National Dried Milk, Orange Juice, Cod-liver Oil and Vitamin A and D tablets) were available at the Welfare Centre on Mondays, Friday afternoons and Saturday mornings. From September, these commodities became available at Messrs. Bloxam and Simms, West Castle Street, during business hours and the hours of sale at the Welfare Centre were gradually reduced. The foods are now available at the Welfare Centre on Mondays from 2.15 p.m. till 4.30 p.m. and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. till 12 noon.

Other County Council Services provided at the Welfare Centre.

(a) Minor Ailments Clinic.

Until 1st June, 1955, school-children were seen daily from 9.0 till 10.0 a.m. for the treatment of Minor Ailments. Since that date, this clinic has been held on Mondays only, when the Medical Officer is in attendance.

(b) Orthopaedic Clinic.

Until 1st September, 1955, an orthopaedic clinic was held on the 1st and 3rd Monday mornings in each month, but since that date it has been discontinued.

(c) Chest Clinic.

Previously held on the 4th Tuesday in each month, pressure of work and large attendances at this clinic necessitated the provision of an extra session, and since the beginning of 1955 the clinic has been held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays in each month commencing at 9.30 a.m. Patients with Tuberculosis and those with whom they have been in close contact attend as required for examination.

(d) Speech Therapy.

Treatment of Speech Defects is given on Fridays from 9.30 a.m. till 12.30 p.m., and 1.30 p.m. till 4.0 p.m. by a qualified Speech Therapist.

(e) Dental Service.

A Local Authority Dental Officer attends the centre each Thursday for the treatment of expectant and nursing mothers, pre-school children and children of compulsory school-age.

Extensions being made to the Welfare Centre will provide a new dental unit, which should be ready for use towards the end of 1956.

(f) Domestic Help Service.

The services of a Domestic Help are available, in the words of the Act, for "any person who is ill, an expectant mother, mentally defective, aged or a child not over compulsory school age." Enquiries regarding this Service are dealt with at the Welfare Centre on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 2.15 - 4.30 p.m.

The Welfare Centre continued to be used during the year for hospital out-patient clinics, owing to lack of adequate accommodation at the Infirmary.

2. Domiciliary MidWifery, Home Nursing and Health Visiting.

Details of these services in the area may be obtained from the Annual Report for the year of the County Medical Officer of Health.

3. Vaccination and Immunisation.

Under the County Council's scheme, vaccination against Small-pox and immunisation against Diphtheria, etc. may be carried out by arrangement with a general practitioner, or at the Welfare Centre during the Child Welfare Clinics, or at the Immunisation and Vaccination Session held on the 3rd Saturday in each month from 10 - 11 a.m.

4. Ambulance Service.

The Central Ambulance Depot for the County is in Shrewsbury (Tel. No. Shrewsbury 6331) to which all requests for an ambulance should be made. Two ambulances and a car for sitting-cases are stationed in Bridgnorth for use on local journeys.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

This Section deals with water supplies, sewerage and sewage disposal, refuse collection and disposal, pest control and other matters relating to environmental hygiene. I am indebted to the Senior Sanitary Inspector, Mr. E.J. Morgans, and the Additional Sanitary Inspector, Mr. E.G. Shaw, for their assistance in the preparation of this, and the following two sections.

WATER SUPPLIES.

1. Mains Supply.

The mains water supply from Rindleford Borehole remained satisfactory as regards quantity during the year.

Chlorination continued to be carried out at the pumping station by means of a pressure-operated chlorinator, which has been in use for many years, and is a rather obsolete piece of apparatus. Samples of the water were taken at intervals from various properties in the town and submitted to bacteriological examination to ascertain its fitness for drinking purposes.

The results of sampling were as follows:-

<u>Place of Sampling</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>B. Coli</u>	<u>Faecal Coli</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
1. College House	2. 3.55.	0	0	Highly satisfactory
2. Stourbridge Road	11. 7.55.	13	1	Unsatisfactory.
3. Stourbridge Road	31.10.55.	1	0	Not entirely satisfactory.
4. Whitburn Street.	31.10.55.	0	0	Highly satisfactory.
5. 23, East Castle St.	7.11.55.	2	0	Unsatisfactory.
6. 23, East Castle St.	7.11.55.	2	0	Unsatisfactory.
7. Central Kitchen	24.10.55.	1	0	Not entirely satisfactory.
8. Grammar School	16.11.55.	0	0	Highly satisfactory.

Of the eight samples submitted, only three were reported as being "Highly Satisfactory", two were "not entirely satisfactory" and three were "unsatisfactory" for a chlorinated supply. This is an undesirable state of affairs, and as similar poor reports on the purity of the water had been obtained in the previous year, it was decided that some investigation should be made into the efficiency of the chlorinating apparatus.

Heavy demands continued to be made on the Rindleford supply during 1955, an average of about 450,000 gallons of water being pumped daily. As in previous years, water was supplied to the R.A.F. Camp, to Tasley and Astley Abbotts, and during 1955 negotiations were completed with the Rural District Council, allowing for a supply to Rindleford Camping Site. Owing to these heavy demands, it had been decided in 1954 that a submersible pump should be purchased to replace one of the existing spindle-pumps, with the object of increasing the pumping-rate from 26,000 to 36,000 gallons per hour. This was installed during the summer of 1955, and came into operation in September.

Water Storage.

A sharp thunderstorm in the month of July provided a timely reminder that the capacity of the town's reservoirs is inadequate for present day needs, and that they are capable of holding less than the quantity of water being used daily. On this occasion, lightning interfered with the electricity supply, and the pumping-machinery was put out of action. A loud-speaker van had to be hired as soon as possible to tour the town, warning the public to economise in the use of water. Fortunately the emergency was of short duration, the electrical fault was soon remedied, and all was well.

The necessity for providing extra storage-space for water, which had been fully considered by the Council the previous year, was again discussed, and the Borough Surveyor was asked to prepare a scheme providing for a reservoir of 200,000 gallons capacity at the Hundred House Bank. Previously the intention of the Council had been to have an additional reservoir adjoining the existing one at the Hermitage.

Fluorine Content of Mains Water.

During the year the Rindleford supply was sampled by the County Council, with the object of ascertaining the amount of Fluorine it contained. The result of chemical analysis showed that it contained less than 0.1 parts per million of Fluorine (as fluorides). This is a low value, the generally accepted ideal concentration of fluorine in drinking water being about 1.0 part per million. This test was made in connection with the proposals to add fluorine experimentally to the water supplies in several towns in the country, and thereafter to study the incidence of dental decay in children living in those areas. In places where the fluorine content of the water is high, a curious mottling of the dental enamel may occur but the incidence of dental caries is low. On the other hand, the virtual absence of this substance from a water is associated with a high incidence of dental caries.

2. Conduit Supply.

There are 24 conduit-supply stand-pipes in various parts of the town, but few are now used for domestic purposes. This water was sampled on two occasions during the year, the results of bacteriological examination being as follows:-

<u>Place of Sampling</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>B. Coli</u>	<u>Faecal Coli</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Squirrel Hotel	2.3.55.	8	0	Scanty growth, non-excretal in origin.
Bank Steps	11.7.55.	17	0	Moderate growth of coliform organisms which do not appear to be excretal in origin.

Because of this slight contamination with coliform organisms, which is always present in the conduit supply, the well was regularly treated with hypochlorite solution as in previous years.

Further Work carried out during the year.

The Senior Sanitary Inspector reports as follows:-

(a) Oldbury - Cleobury Mortimer Road.

Work was completed on the laying of 140 yards of 3" cast iron main in Oldbury to provide a piped supply to "Merton Terrace" and "The Hollies", the well supplies to these properties having failed.

(b) Stourbridge Road - Star Aluminium Works.

During the Spring a 120 yard length of 4" cast iron main was laid from the existing main in Stourbridge Road as far as the proposed entrance to the new works, to supply their needs for general use.

(c) Grove Estate - Improved Supply.

In order to improve the supply to The Grove housing estate a new 6" asbestos main was proposed. Consent of the Ministry was received and the work was started in May and successfully completed in July. By using this main for the Grove and Stourbridge Road area only, the pressure has improved on the main to Kidderminster Road and Quatford.

(d) Grove Estate - Housing Development.

To provide for the needs of 40 houses which were begun during the year, and for a further 46 houses to be built in 1956/57, new lengths of 3" cast iron main were laid after the initial formation of the estate roads serving these houses.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

Satisfactory progress was made during 1955 on the new sewerage and sewage disposal scheme for the town, and the disposal works in Stanley Lane were put into operation towards the end of the year. They did not by then deal with sewage from all the areas to be served by the scheme, and initially only treated sewage transported by gravity from the North-west area of the town. By the end of the year the 12" pumping main from the pumping station to Stanley Lane had been completed, and good progress had been made with the construction of the pumping station at Underhill Street. It was hoped that the scheme would be in full operation in the early months of 1956.

Oldbury.

Sanitary circumstances in Oldbury continued to cause concern during the year. In 1954 the Ministry of Housing and Local Government had given consent for the implementation of the sewerage scheme for this part of the Borough, and the tender of the contractors engaged on the main scheme, and amounting to £20,832, was accepted. When the rates estimates for the year 1955/56 were being considered, however, the Council had second thoughts on the advisability of proceeding with the full scheme as prepared by the Consulting Engineers. As work had by then already commenced on the laying of the sewer up the Cleobury Mortimer road, it was decided that this portion of the scheme should be completed, and the remainder deferred for the time being.

An alternative, and less costly scheme for sewerage the remainder of Oldbury was mean-time prepared by the Borough Surveyor and approved by the Council. This allowed for sewage from those properties which could not be connected to the Cleobury Mortimer Road sewer to be dealt with by a separate small sewage disposal works to be constructed at the site of the filter-bed serving Oldbury Grange.

Quatford.

In accordance with the Council's request in 1954, the Borough Surveyor submitted a scheme for the sewerage of Quatford, and the construction of a small disposal works near the river. On account of the land-levels encountered in that area, part of the sewer leading to the works would have to be laid above ground-level on brick piers. It would also be necessary to provide for a pump to pump the sewage to the filter-bed, which would have to be situated above the flood-level of the river. The estimated cost of the scheme was to be about £8,000, and it was approved by the Council in August 1955.

Public Conveniences.

It is unfortunate to have to report that no progress was made during the year towards the provision of new public conveniences in the High Town, which are so badly needed. The reason for this was, of course, the difficulty in finding a suitable central site, the site chosen in the previous year in Bank Street having failed to receive the approval of the Local Planning Authority. It is to be hoped that every effort will be made to procure a suitable site in the near future.

Various complaints were received by the officials in the course of the year concerning, particularly, the condition of the conveniences under the Town Hall. It should be

realised by those with grievances, however, that members of the public themselves must shoulder some of the responsibility for maintaining the conveniences in a satisfactory condition. In this, as in so many other matters, the innocents have to suffer as a result of the negligence and carelessness of the guilty few.

Considerable expenditure is incurred in the course of each year on repairs and replacement of fixtures which have been damaged, wilfully or otherwise. Toilet-paper containers, especially, seem to come in for very rough treatment, and the slot machines in the doors are frequently out of action.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

There were no changes during the year in the arrangements for the collection of refuse and waste paper in the Borough.

The condition of the refuse tip in Stanley Lane was again discussed at length by the Public Health Committee in the summer months, and a petition signed by householders in Love Lane complaining of nuisance due to flies breeding on the tip was received in September. It was decided that a bull-dozer should be hired to level part of the surface of the tip, and that the surface should thereafter be covered with soil removed during the construction of the adjoining sewage disposal works. This work was accordingly carried out towards the end of the year.

Reference must again be made to the fact that the tipping space in Stanley Lane is gradually being used up and that no other site for tipping is available in the Borough. The provision of an incinerator of sufficient size to deal with all combustible refuse was again the subject of much discussion, and preliminary investigations regarding a suitable site for this were made in the latter months of the year.

PEST CONTROL.

The Borough shares the services of a Rodent Operative with the Borough of Wenlock, and this arrangement continued to work satisfactorily during the year. All premises where infestations of rats and mice occurred received treatment and infestations in the sewers and on the refuse tip were kept under control.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

The Corporation is responsible, by the provisions of the Factories Acts, for ensuring the adequacy and suitability of sanitary conveniences in all factories in the Borough, and in the case of factories in which mechanical power is not used is also responsible for inspecting the premises to ensure that working conditions are satisfactory.

The following table gives the details which have to be included in the Annual Report.

FACTORIES ACTS 1937 and 1948.
PART I OF THE ACT.

1. INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises	No. on Register	Inspect -ions	Number of Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
1. Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.	8	4	1	-
2. Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	49	12	3	-
3. Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises).	5	4	-	-
Total	62	20	4	-

2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found	Re-medied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspect -or	By H.M. Inspect -or	
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	2	2	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	1	1	-	-	-
Total	4	4	-	-	-

PART VIII OF THE ACT.

OUTWORK.

(Sections 110 and 111)

Nature of Work	No. of out-workers in August list required by Sect. 110 (1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending list to the Council	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises	Not-ices Served	Prose-cutions
Wearing (Making Apparel etc.)	1	-	-	-	-	-

HOUSING.

The inclusion of details on housing matters in the Annual Reports of Medical Officers of Health is now no longer required. Returns relating to the demolition, closing and repair of houses under the Housing and Public Health Acts now have to be submitted quarterly by the Local Authority to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, and these returns, it is considered, will be adequate for Departmental purposes. Some details will, however, be given in this Section as in former years.

The housing position in the town at the end of 1955 was as follows:-

Number of inhabited houses	2,155
Number of Council-owned houses	499
Houses completed in 1955	33
(a) Council -	22		
(b) Private -	11		

Total applications for Council houses ...	261
Applications for Improvement Grants ...	8
Applications for above approved ...	8

Number of houses under construction	
at 31.12.55...	38
(a) Council -	28
(b) Private -	10

Fewer houses were completed in 1955 than in the previous year - 33 as compared with 61. The number of private houses reaching completion was almost the same as in 1954 - 11 as compared with 10.

The year saw the completion of the contract for 65 houses on The Grove Site, and proposals for the construction of a further 86 houses were submitted to the Ministry. Authorisation was however only given for the construction of 40 houses in the first instance. Tenders were invited; that of the contractors engaged on the previous scheme was accepted, and work commenced before the end of the year.

The shortage of satisfactory housing accommodation in the town remains a big problem, and the number of applicants awaiting Council houses is still very large.

Housing Points Scheme.

A revised points scheme for the allocation of Council houses was approved by the Council at the beginning of the year. Growing dissatisfaction with the existing scheme, which in many cases did not give a true indication of housing need, had led the Council at the end of 1954 to request the Town Clerk to prepare a revision.

The new scheme divides an applicant's points into (1) basic points, given for factors directly affecting housing need, and (2) balancing points, given for other factors, and enabling a distinction to be made between applicants with an equal number of basic points.

All applicants for Council houses were required to complete a new form in order that their points under the revised scheme might be assessed.

Improvement Grants.

Eight applications for Improvement Grants were made during 1955, all of which were approved by the Council. This represents an increase of three on the number of applications made in 1954. Interest on the part of house-property owners towards this scheme has remained very poor, and only fifteen applications for Grants have been received in the past five years. Of these twelve were approved.

It is a pity to see some of the older houses in the town, which could be brought up to present day standards of fitness, gradually deteriorating through lack of attention, until they are only fit for demolition. The Local Authority can give a grant not exceeding 50% of the cost of approved improvements, the maximum grant allowable being £400.

Housing for Elderly Persons.

At a meeting of the General Purposes Committee in May, 1955, Mr. F.G. Fawcett, the County Welfare Officer, outlined the scheme which Salop County Council had formulated for the provision of grouped dwellings for old people.

The object of the scheme, which was modelled on one successfully implemented in various areas in Dorset, was to enable old people to live out their lives in their own homes, instead of having to go to an Old People's Home (which by many is still looked upon as "The Workhouse") when failing faculties rendered them less able to attend to their everyday needs.

According to this scheme, the Group should consist of about 12-18 dwellings, (which may be uniform in design, or varied according to choice), together with a main block containing common-rooms, quarters for a warden, and some accommodation for visitors. The group should form part of a community, should be sited, if possible, within easy reach of shops and other facilities, and should have adequate open space for gardens, either individual or communal. The provision of central-heating to all the houses was considered most important.

The Housing Authority would be responsible for providing and maintaining the houses, but the expenditure on welfare services, e.g. the common-rooms, warden's quarters and wages, etc. would be defrayed by the Welfare Authority. The Council expressed great interest in this scheme, and it was decided that the possibilities of constructing such a group of dwellings for the old people of the town should be investigated.

Slum Clearance.

Consideration was given during the year to the position in respect of the 14 areas in the town which had been declared as Clearance Areas in 1944/45, i.e. areas in which the most satisfactory method of dealing with the bad conditions is by demolition of all the buildings in the area. For various reasons the Council had not proceeded to secure the clearance of these areas.

In view of the lapse of time since the declarations were made, the changed circumstances in some of the areas, and with the slum clearance proposals (submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Rents and Repairs Act, 1954) in mind, it was decided that the advice of the Ministry should be sought on the matter.

Acting on the advice received, the Council rescinded their former resolutions in respect of all these clearance areas.

In their Slum Clearance proposals, the Council estimated that 75 houses could be dealt with by clearance area procedure within 5 years. Progress in the matter is dependent on the Council's housing programme, as the authority is obliged to rehouse all occupants from a clearance area.

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MEAT.

Licences were issued in respect of five slaughterhouses in the town during 1955. Four were used regularly and the other only very rarely. Butchers in the town who did not slaughter their own animals or have them slaughtered locally continued to buy their meat from Shrewsbury or Craven Arms abattoirs.

The carcasses of all animals slaughtered in the town were inspected before the meat was put on sale.

Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned
in whole or in part

	Cattle Exclud- ing Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed (if known)	181	0	5	991	877	0
Number inspected	181	0	5	991	877	0
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis & Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	0	0	0	1	1	0
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	7	0	0	3	4	0
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	3.87%	0	0	.4%	.57%	0
<u>Tuberculosis only:</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	3	0	0	0	32	0
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	1.66%	0	0	0	3.65%	0
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	0	0	0	0	0	0
Generalised and totally condemned	0	0	0	0	0	0

The total quantity of beef and pork condemned during the year as unfit for human consumption is as follows:-

	<u>Cwts.</u>	<u>Qrs.</u>	<u>Lbs.</u>
1. On account of Tuberculosis	7	0	22
2. On account of other diseases	1	2	20

One complete carcase of mutton, 3 livers and several part livers were also condemned on account of "other diseases" but no weights for these are available.

Other Foods Condemned.

Prepared and cooked meats.

Meat	-	10 lbs. 6 ozs.
Sausage	-	53 lbs. 12 ozs.
Bacon	-	15 lbs. 8 ozs.
Pies	-	9 lbs.

Canned and Potted foods.

Meat	-	31 tins (96 lbs. 8 ozs)
Vegetables	-	77 tins (70 lbs. 9½ ozs.)
Fish	-	33 tins (17 lbs.)
Fruit	-	106 tins (144 lbs.)
Soup	-	2 tins (1 lb.)
Milk	-	13 tins (19 pints)
Peanut Butter	-	1 pot (8 ozs.)
Sandwich Spread	-	2 pots (8 ozs.)
Meat Paste	-	2 pots (3 ozs.)
Orange Juice	-	1 tin (1 lb. 3 ozs.)

Other foods.

Cereals	-	59 cartons (26 lbs. 5½ ozs.)
Minced meat	-	1 jar (15 ozs.)
Cheese	-	79 lns. 12½ ozs.
Desiccated Coconut	-	38 lbs.
Dried fruit	-	2 lbs. 12 ozs.
Beverage	-	2 tins (10 ozs.)
Pickled foods	-	1 lb. 10 ozs.

Condemned food is collected by the Corporation, or delivered by the owners, and destroyed on the small incinerator at the refuse tip.

MILK.

Registered Dairies (under Milk and Dairies Regulations)	-	5
Licensed Dealers (operating from Registered Dairies)	-	5
Other licensed dealers (trading from other shops)	-	7
Supplementary Dealers (trading in the town from other districts)	-	1
Milk producers in the district under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture	-	13

During the year nine samples of milk were taken and submitted for examination for cleanliness, keeping quality, and evidence of satisfactory heat treatment. Six samples were reported as satisfactory.

ICE-CREAM.

There are 47 premises in the Borough registered for the sale of ice-cream and all but one sell pre-packed products. The "cold-mix" method is employed by the trader who manufactures his own ice-cream. By this method water is added to a prepared powder supplied in air-tight containers and the mixture immediately frozen.

FOOD PREMISES.

Number of Food Premises in the area by type.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Inspections made</u>
Grocers and General Stores	31	49
Greengrocers	14	4
Butchers	11	56
Cafes	16	12
Bakers	10	12
Fishmongers	5	8

Number of Premises registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Number of Inspections</u>
Selling cooked meats, etc.	7	16
Selling fried fish	7	4
Selling ice-cream	47	27

Regular visits continued to be made by the Sanitary Inspectors to food premises in the town during the year, when advice was given to shopkeepers on matters relating to cleanliness and general food hygiene. The standards in several shops have improved during the year, but there remain some where conditions still leave a lot to be desired.

However tireless the efforts of the Inspectors to improve conditions in food premises may be, there is no doubt that members of the public can help a great deal by demanding higher standards of hygiene in the shops, the cafes, the snack-bars, canteens, etc; by being courageous enough to give voice to complaint when they meet with examples of careless and unhygienic food-handling, when they are served with a cracked and dirty cup, a fork with the remains of the last meal it dealt with still clinging to it, where they see open foods inadequately protected from dirt and dust, flies and wasps, and so on. But the complaints to be of most value must be voiced on the spot, and to the person responsible, and not merely to the Public Health Officials at some later date.

SECTION F.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The cases of Infectious Disease notified by General Practitioners during the year were as follows:-

	<u>No. of Cases.</u>
Respiratory Tuberculosis	5
Measles	5
Whooping-cough	4
Scarlet Fever	2
Non-respiratory Tuberculosis	1
Acute Paralytic Poliomyelitis	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	1
Acute Pneumonia	1
Total	<u>20</u>

The Borough has again remained remarkably free from cases of notifiable infectious disease during 1955, the total of 20 cases being the same as that for 1954.

Acute Paralytic Poliomyelitis.

In this case which was complicated by other factors the diagnosis was somewhat difficult and it is by no means certain that it was Poliomyelitis. The patient was isolated at home and recovered completely.

Tuberculosis.

Six cases of Tuberculosis were notified during the year, two less than in 1954. Of the six, five were cases in which the respiratory system was affected and the other was of the non-respiratory form of the disease.

One death occurred during the year from Respiratory Tuberculosis.

The number of cases on the Tuberculosis Register at the end of the year was as follows:-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Respiratory	20	21	41
Non-Respiratory	3	4	7

Vaccination against Smallpox.

Though no longer compulsory in this country, vaccination of babies against smallpox is far from being no longer necessary, as some people are apt to imagine. Indeed it might be said to be more necessary than before in these days of increased and speedier air-travel from countries where the disease is by no means rare.

Ideally babies should be vaccinated for the first time at about the age of 4 months. When the initial procedure and subsequent revaccinations in later life should cause little or no general upset. Done for the first time in later childhood, or in adult life, it may sometimes cause unpleasant local and general reactions.

During 1955, 57 babies under the age of one year in the Borough were vaccinated, which is approximately 47.5% of those eligible for this protection, if 4 months is taken as the optimum age. Concern has recently been expressed by the Minister of Health at the current neglect of vaccination, and it is considered that for the adequate protection of the public against the epidemic spread of Small-pox, not fewer than 75% of babies should be vaccinated in the first year of life.

Immunisation against Diphtheria.

Figures supplied by the County Health Department show that 81 babies under the age of 12 months in the town were immunised against diphtheria during 1955. If 8 months is taken as the optimum age for this protection, this number represents approximately 65.3% of the babies eligible during the year, and is a great improvement on the low percentage of 32.8 which had to be recorded for 1954.

The national campaign directed towards the eradication of diphtheria has as its object the protection of 75% of all babies before they reach their first birthday so there is still room for improvement in the Borough figures. The efforts of all concerned should be increased, in the hope that we may attain the prescribed "target" in subsequent years.
